

P A P E R S
RELATING TO
THE ACTION
BETWEEN HIS MAJESTY'S SLOOP
L I L L E B E L T,
OF EIGHTEEN GUNS,
AND THE
UNITED STATES FRIGATE
PRESIDENT,
OF FORTY-FOUR GUNS.

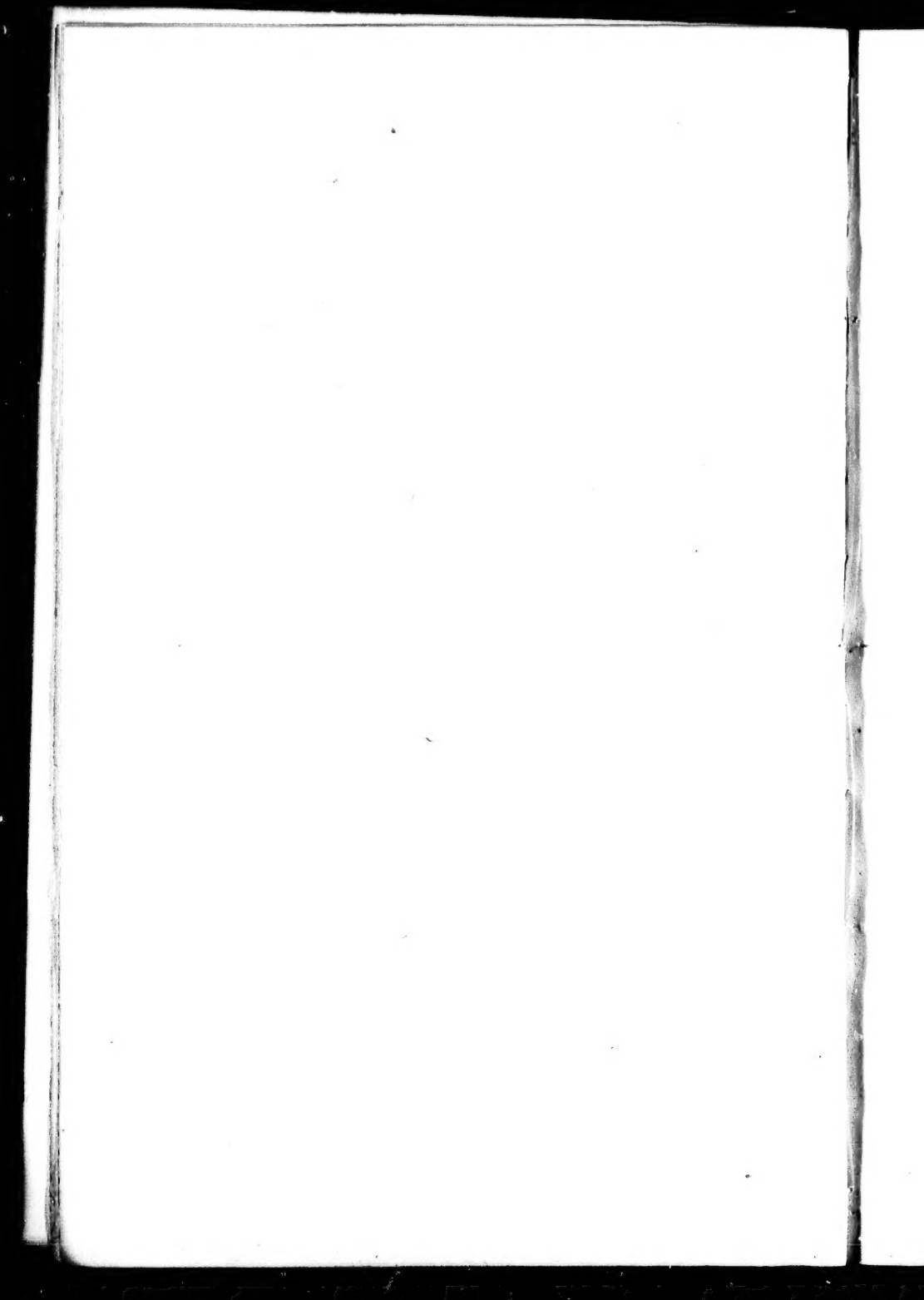
LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. MURRAY, 32, FLEET-STREET:

1811.

**T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,
Whitefriars, London.**

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following papers, and the observations by which they are preceded, appeared in the Times news-paper of the 7th instant. They are so important, and indeed so satisfactory and conclusive on the subject of the Action between the Lille Belt and President, that the publisher, having ascertained that the papers are genuine and authentic, thinks it a duty, not less to the brave officers and seamen of the Lille Belt, than to the country at large, to present them to the public in a less transitory shape than that in which they at first appeared.



FROM THE TIMES NEWS-PAPER,

DECEMBER 7TH, 1811.

“THE dispute respecting the firing of the first shot in the action between the *President* and the *Lille Belt* being resumed by Mr. Madison, and the blame of that transaction imputed to us, we now think it proper to bring forward all the documents we are able, some of which we reserved expressly for this occasion, in support of our opinion that America was the aggressor. We are aware how loudly some people blamed us, when we declared, though in very cautious terms, our disbelief of the evidence given on the American court-martial: but we knew that we possessed document against document; and of the occurrences which took place in a moment of extreme

agitation to the bravest, we were very certain that British seamen were, from habit, likely to be more accurate and cool observers than those of America, none of whom, probably, were ever in an action before.

“ The public have already seen the letters of Commodore Rodgers, and Captain Bingham to their respective governments, each charging the other with being the aggressor; which, nevertheless, for the sake of accuracy, we have this day thought it our duty to republish. They have likewise seen the minutes of the American court-martial, *proving* that the *Lille Belt* fired first; but we now bring forward that to which they were before strangers,—the minutes of a court of inquiry held at Halifax, *proving*, in like manner, that the *President* fired first. So far, therefore, Great Britain and America are equal; they carry their defence to the same length, and support it by the same testimony. But we go much far-

ther than this ; for we likewise now first bring forth the depositions of two seamen,—the one an American, we believe, and the other an Englishman,—who were on board the *President* at the time of the action, and who swear that the first shot was discharged from their ship ; and to this new testimony we solicit proper regard. Nor does England's excess of evidence over that of America rest even here ; for we have long ago seen Captain Bingham's instructions, charging him to treat the citizens of the United States with the utmost respect ; while America has hitherto studiously concealed the instructions under which Commodore Rodgers sailed.

“ It is asserted in the deposition of one of these seamen, that the first shot was fired by accident ; than which nothing is more likely among inexperienced persons : and how strongly does this confirm the opinion which we gave long ago, and have now repeated, of the agitation which must have

prevailed on board a vessel manned by marines who had never before been in action!

“ But to recur to another topic, no less essential to the dispute than firing the first shot. A gun may, as we have seen, go off and do mischief by accident: but a threatening position cannot be assumed but by intention. Who, then, *intentionally first* put himself in a posture of offence? Commodore Rodgers, clearly, by his own acknowledgment, and Captain Bingham’s assertion, supported by the evidence of his officers at Halifax. These are the words of the two captains, speaking at the same moment of time:—‘ By his manner of steering down, he evidently wished to lay his ship in a position for raking, which I frustrated by wearing three times.’—*Captain Bingham’s letter, and the evidence of all his officers to the same effect.*

“ What says Commodore Rodgers to this? ‘ At fifteen minutes past eight I directed

Captain Ludlow to take a position *to windward of her, and on the same tack*, within short speaking distance: this, however, the master of the chase *appeared from his manœuvres anxious* to prevent; as he wore, and hauled by the wind on different tacks, four times successively between this period and the time of our arriving at the position which I had ordered to be taken.' (*Commodore Rodgers's letter.*) Why did Commodore Rodgers assume this position? To speak to us: but why did he wish to speak to us to windward upon the same tack, or in other words, in the most formidable position for raking us; and that, too, after he saw that we had three or four times avoided suffering him to do it? Let him, or any one else for him, answer that.

"Thus do we think that we have laid this matter at rest finally: but, as we said a day or two ago, it is in a national point of view of no great moment. Had either government avowed and attempted to jus-

tify the hostile deed of its captain, there is just cause of retaliation and war on the part of the other. But, on the contrary, both nations disclaim any act of violence: we have proved that we gave our officer orders of a directly opposite tendency. If, therefore, on the supposition that Commodore Rodgers fired the first shot, than which nothing can be more certain, America disowns, and is sorry for his rashness; or if, supposing Captain Bingham could have fired first, we do the same: what results from this event to impede, in any degree, the amicable arrangement of our other differences?

“ We cannot conclude without again requesting attention to the depositions of the two seamen, particularly that taken at Halifax. It is evidence of much more than the mere commencement of the action. The fitting out of the *President*—the arrival of Commodore Rodgers on board—the taking in of shot and wads—all these

points, we fear, argue 'a foregone determination;' but still, if America is content to disavow the act, it were more politic in us to believe her assurance."

PAPERS, &c.

I.

THE INSTRUCTIONS

Under which Captain Bingham was sailing, when he was met with and chased by the President.

By Herbert Sawyer, Esq. Rear-Admiral of the Red, and Commander in Chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels employed and to be employed in the river St. Lawrence, along the coast of Nova-Scotia, the Islands of Anticoste, Madelaine, and St. John, and Cape Breton, the Bay of Fundy, and at or about the Island of Bermuda, or Somers Island.

You are hereby required and directed to put to sea in his Majesty's sloop under your command, and proceed without loss of time off Charlestown, where you may expect to meet Captain Peachell, in the *Guerriere*, to whom you will deliver the packet you will herewith receive, and follow his orders for your farther proceedings. Should you not meet the *Guerriere* off Charlestown, you will stand for the northward, and use your utmost endeavours to join him off the Capes of Virginia, or of New York; and in the

event of not meeting the Guerriere, you will cruize as long as your provisions and water will last, and then repair to Halifax for farther orders. You are to pay due regard to protecting the trade of his Majesty's subjects, and the capture or destruction of the ships of the enemy. You are to be particularly careful not to give any just cause of offence to the government or subjects of the United States of America ; and to give very particular orders to this effect to the officers you may have occasion to send on board ships under the American flag. You are not to anchor in any of the American ports, but in case of absolute necessity, and then put to sea again as soon as possible.

Given under my hand at Bermuda, this 19th day of April, 1811.

HERBERT SAWYER.

To Arthur Batt Bingham, Esq. Commander of his Majesty's sloop Lille Belt. By command of the Rear-Admiral.

H. N. SOMERVILLE.

II.

Captain Bingham's Official Account of his Proceedings.

His Majesty's sloop *Lille Belt*, May 21, 1811; latitude 36 53. N. longitude 71 49. W. Cape Charles bearing west 48 miles.

SIR,

I beg leave to acquaint you, that, in pursuance of your orders to join his Majesty's ship *Guerriere*, and being on my return from the northward, not having fallen in with her, that at about eleven A. M. May 10th, saw a strange sail, to which I immediately gave chase: at one P. M. discovered her to be a man of war, apparently a frigate, standing to the eastward, who, when he made us out, edged away for us, and set his royals,—made the signal 275, and finding it not answered, concluded she was an American frigate, as he had a commodore's blue pendant flying at the main,—hoisted the colours, and made all sail south, the course I intended steering round Cape Hatteras; the stranger edging away, but not making any more sail. At half-past three he made sail in chase, when I made the private signal, which was not answered. At half-past six, finding he gained so considerably on us as not to be able to elude him during the night, being within gunshot, and clearly discerning the stars in his broad pendant, I imagined

the more prudent method was to bring to, and hoist the colours, that no mistake might arise, and that he might see what we were : the ship was therefore brought-to, colours hoisted, guns double shotted, and every preparation made in case of a surprise. By his manner of steering down, he evidently wished to lay his ship in a position for raking, which I frustrated by wearing three times. About a quarter past eight he came within hail. I hailed, and asked what ship it was? He repeated my question. I again hailed, and asked what ship it was? He again repeated my words, and fired a broadside, which I immediately returned. The action then became general, and continued so for about three-quarters of an hour, when he ceased firing, and appeared to be on fire about the main hatchway. He then filled : I was obliged to desist from firing, as the ship falling off, no gun would bear, and had no after-sail to keep her to ; all the rigging and sails cut to pieces, not a brace or bow-line left. He hailed, and asked what ship this was? I told him: he then asked me if I had struck my colours? My answer was, No! and asked what ship it was? As plainly as I could understand (he having shot some distance at this time), he answered, The United States frigate. He fired no more guns, but stood from us, giving no reason for his most extraordinary conduct. At day-light in the morning, saw a ship to windward, which having

made out well what we were, bore up and passed within hail, fully prepared for action. About eight o'clock he hailed, and said, if I pleased, he would send a boat on board ; I replied in the affirmative ; and a boat accordingly came with an officer, and a message from Commodore Rodgers, of the President United States frigate, to say that he lamented much the unfortunate affair (as he termed it) that had happened ; and that, had he known our force was so inferior, he should not have fired at me. I asked his motive for firing at all ; his reply was that we fired the first gun at him, which was positively not the case. I cautioned both the officers and men to be particularly careful, and not suffer any more than one man to be at the gun. Nor is it probable that a sloop of war, within pistol-shot of a large forty-four gun frigate, should commence hostilities. He offered me every assistance I stood in need of, and submitted to me that I had better put into one of the ports of the United States, which I immediately declined. By the manner in which he apologised, it appeared to me evident, that had he fallen in with a British frigate he would certainly have brought her to action ; and what farther confirms me in that opinion is, that his guns were not only loaded with round and grape shot, but with every scrap of iron that could possibly be collected.

I have to lament the loss of thirty-two men killed and wounded, among whom is the master.

His Majesty's sloop is much damaged in her masts, sails, rigging, and hull; and as there are many shot through between wind and water, and many shots still remaining in her side, and upper works all shot away, starboard pump also, I have judged it proper to proceed to Halifax, which will, I hope, meet with your approbation.

I cannot speak in too high terms of the officers and men I have the honour to command, for their steady and active conduct throughout the whole of this business, who had much to do, as a gale of wind came on the second night after the action. My first lieutenant, Mr. John Moberly, who is in every respect a most excellent officer, afforded me very great assistance in stopping the leaks himself in the gale, securing the masts, and doing every thing in his power. It would be the greatest injustice was I not also to speak most highly of Lieutenant Levell, second lieutenant; of Mr. M'Queen, master, who, as I have before stated, was wounded in the right arm, in nearly the middle of the action; and Mr. Wilson, master's mate. Indeed, the conduct of every officer and man was so good it is impossible for me to discriminate.

I beg leave to enclose a list of the thirty-two men killed and wounded, most of them mortally I fear.

I hope, Sir, in this affair I shall appear to have done my duty, and conducted myself as I ought

to have done against so superior a force; and
that the honour of the British colours was well
supported.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) A. B. BINGHAM, Captain.

To Herbert Sawyer, Esq. Rear-Admiral
of the Red, Commander in Chief, &c.

III.

STATEMENT

*By the Officers of his Majesty's Sloop Lille Belt,
at a Court of Enquiry, held before the three
undernamed Captains of his Majesty's Royal
Navy at Halifax, May 29, 1811.*

The Right Honourable Lord James Townshend, Captain of his Majesty's ship Eolus, and senior officer at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Charles John Austen, Esq. Captain of his Majesty's ship Cleopatra; and

Alexander Gordon, Esq. Commander of his Majesty's sloop Ratler.

LIEUTENANT MOBERLY, senior lieutenant, states, that on the 16th instant, while cruising off the coast of America, Cape Charles bearing west, fifty-four miles, at eleven A. M. saw a strange sail,—that she was a lugger was reported from the mast-head, on the starboard beam; we then steering S.S.W. the wind aft, or a little on the starboard quarter; on which, took in our studding-sails, and hauled our wind for her on the starboard tack:—shortly after, made her out to be a ship. At thirty past two P. M. having then made out the chase to be a frigate, with a commodore's broad pendant flying, being then about six miles, and not having answered any of our private signals, viz. 275, private signal, and our number, concluded her to be the American fri-

gate United States; shewed our colours, and steered our course south. Set studding-sails at five o'clock, observed the frigate make all sail; and to keep more away for us: at seven, found she was gaining on us fast. Captain Bingham then thinking it best to speak her before dark, shortened sail, and hove-to, colours up: we then making out her stars in her broad pendant, beat to quarters, and got all clear for action, a second time, having beat before at two P. M.; double shotted and double breached the guns. At fifty past seven, observed the frigate to have shortened sails to topsails, top-gallant sails, and jib, and standing down as if with an intention of passing under our stern; wore twice to evade this. Captain Bingham hailed, and was not answered: wore again, to close to us, on the larboard beam. Captain Bingham hailed the ship, "*a-hoy!*" which was repeated word for word by the frigate: Captain Bingham asked what ship that was, which was also repeated as before; and on asking a second time, was answered by a broadside. Captain Bingham was then standing on the mid-ship gun; jumped off, and gave orders to fire, which was done in less than a minute after her first fire, we being quite ready, guns pointed; and continued firing for about an hour; when the frigate ceased firing, and hailed us to know what ship this was. Captain Bingham answered, his Majesty's ship *Lille Belt*, several times,

before he understood us. He then asked if our colours were down; No! was Captain Bingham's answer. Captain Bingham then hailed to know what ship that was, and was answered, the United States frigate, the name we could not understand. In the mean time the frigate had filled, and was standing from us; a short time after lost sight of her—hove to for the night, having no sail to set. At day-light saw a sail to windward, made her out to be the same ship we had engaged; at six she bore up for us under easy sail, at eight she passed within hail, asked permission to send a boat on board, which was granted; boat came on board, staid ten minutes, then returned; understood the frigate to be the President, belonging to the United States, Commodore Rodgers; observed the President to fill and stand on, on the starboard tack, under her topsails.

Lieutenant THOMAS LEVELL states, that on the 16th of May, 1811, at eleven A. M. saw a strange sail from the mast-head, which was reported to be a lugger, having her main-top gallant sail bended, fore and mizen set; we were then going nearly before the wind; turned the hands up, took in studding sails, and made sail in chase on the starboard tack; at thirty past one, observed her to be a frigate; made the private signal, our number also 275, neither of which she answered; observing her to have a blue

broad pendant at her mast-head, at two wore ship, and steered our course south, hoisted our colours; observed her to be in chase of us; supposed her to be an American frigate; cleared ship for action; at five beat to quarters a second time, double shotted the guns, and double breached those that were bad; at thirty past seven, shortened sail, and hove-to, as she was coming up with us very fast; hoisted our colours; observed the stars in her broad pendant; wore ship three or four times, to prevent his passing under our stern, which he evidently intended; at eight hailed her, when on the starboard beam: received no answer: wore ship at ten past eight; she hauled her foresail up, and hove-to within half pistol-shot of our weather-beam; Captain Bingham standing on the gun abaft the larboard gangway, hailed the ship "a-hoy!" which words were repeated word for word, and she immediately fired a broadside; Captain Bingham jumped off the gun, and gave orders to fire, which we did instantly, the captains of the guns standing with the lanyards of the locks in their hands, and the guns pointed at her; continued firing about an hour, when she ceased, and hailed us, "What ship that!" Captain Bingham replied, His Majesty's ship *Lille Belt* several times before he understood us; he then asked what ship that was; they answered, the United States frigate: the name we

did not understand, and asked if our colours were down; Captain Bingham answered No! he then filled on the starboard tack: we very soon lost sight of her; continued all night refitting; at daylight observed her laying-to to windward about eight or ten miles; about six she bore down under her topsails and foresails; at eight he hailed "ship-a-hoy! I'll send a boat on board if you please, sir." "Very well, sir," was Captain Bingham's answer; the boat came on board, and remained about ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, after which he wore, and stood to the westward under his topsails. Latitude 36. 53. longitude 71. 49. Cape Charles bearing west fifty miles.

Mr. JAMES FRANKLIN, boatswain, states, at half-past six o'clock observed the frigate coming up under studding sails on both sides; about half-past seven shortened sail and brought-to; hoisted the colours; at a quarter before eight hailed; no answer; wore ship; about two minutes before eight the ship was hailed; the captain's words were repeated twice without making any answer; then he fired a whole broadside; about a minute returned a broadside from us; continuing firing for about an hour, and then he ceased firing, and hailed, and asked what ship this was; and he was answered by the captain, the Lille Belt; and he then asked if the colours were down; the answer was, No! and I heard the

captain say, that they should not come down, and ordered the starboard guns to be manned; then the captain hailed to know what ship that was, being under the forecastle wounded; I could not hear the answer. I then came down below, and there was no more firing after.

Mr. HINSHELWOOD, purser, states, that on the 16th instant, at eleven A. M. saw a strange sail; made sail in chase of her; thirty minutes past one observed her to be a frigate; made the private signal, our number, and 275, neither of which were answered; at two made out a commodore's broad pendant, apparently an American; cleared for quarters; observed the frigate to be in chase of us; at five beat to quarters a second time; thirty minutes past seven hove-to and hoisted our colours; at eight hailed her, no answer; wore ship; at ten minutes past eight she hove-to close to windward of us. Captain Bingham standing on the gun abaft the larboard gangway, hailed, "a-hoy! the ship," which they repeated: Captain Bingham asked, what ship is that, which was also repeated, and immediately gave us a broadside, commencing firing from the midships of the deck; Captain Bingham jumped off the gun, and gave orders to fire, which was instantly done; continued firing about an hour: observed the frigate to leave off firing; she hailed at the same time, and asked what ship this was: Captain Bingham answered, his Bri-

tannic Majesty's ship *Lille Belt*, six or seven times before they understood; he then asked if our colours were down, to which Captain Bingham answered No! and asked what ship that was: she answered the United States ship,—the name we could not understand. She then made sail; at day-light observed her to windward, at six she bore down, and at eight passed within hail: hailed the ship, and said he would send a boat on board, if Captain Bingham pleased; a boat came on board, and remained about a quarter of an hour; she then made sail to the westward.

Mr. WILLIAM TURNER, surgeon, states, when steering to the southward from off New York, on the 16th of May, 1811, at eleven A. M. a strange sail was reported to the westward, which was immediately given chase to: on nearing, observed her to be a frigate, standing to the eastward, with an American broad pendant at her main-top-gallant-mast head. We then resumed our course to the southward, and shewed the ensign and pendant: stranger observed shortly after to alter her course, to join us; when the *Lille Belt* made more sail: strange frigate did the same: finding the stranger joined us fast, prepared for action; shortened sail, and hove-to sometime before sun-set: immediately after the *Lille Belt* hove-to, the strange frigate shortened sail, coming down very slowly. I shortly after went below; at ten minutes past eight o'clock P. M. Captain Bingham hailed the stranger

twice, very loudly, but received no answer : about five minutes after Captain Bingham again hailed, and was answered from the frigate, to what purpose I could not distinctly understand. Captain Bingham again hailed twice, and immediately heard the frigate fire, and the whole passed over us. I then distinctly heard Captain Bingham give orders to fire away : we returned the broadside within the space of twenty seconds ; the action continued with great vigour for about forty-five minutes, to the best of my judgment.

We, the undersigned, have duly examined the officers herein named belonging to his Majesty's sloop *Lille Belt*, respecting the attack made on that ship by the United States frigate *President*, have received the above as a true statement of all the occurrences. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands, on board his Majesty's ship *Eolus*, Halifax harbour, Nova Scotia, 29th of May, 1811.

J. TOWNSHEND.

C. J. AUSTEN.

A. GORDON.

IV.

Deposition on Oath of a Seaman who was on Board the President during the Action.

Province of Nova Scotia, Halifax.

The examination and information of WILLIAM BURKET, mariner, taken before John Howe and

Thomas Boggs, Esquires, two of his Majesty's justices of the peace for the county of Halifax, this twenty-second day of June, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, eight hundred and eleven ; who being duly sworn, depose and saith, that he was born at Deptford, in England ; that he is about twenty-three years of age ; that he has reason to think he has a mother still living at Deptford ; that he left home about three years ago, and went to Montego-bay, Jamaica ; that he left that place afterwards and proceeded to New York, in a brig called the Pizarro ; that sometime in August, 1809, being in a state of intoxication, he was forcibly carried on board the United States armed schooner Revenge, in which he continued until she was cast away in Long Island Sound ; that he was afterwards transferred to the United States ship, the President ; that he was entered on board the Revenge, and afterwards on board the President, by the name of Elijah Shepardson ; that he was on board the President the first week in May last, when that ship was laying at Anapolis, in Maryland ; that Commodore Rodgers suddenly came on board from Havre-de-Grace, where he had been with his family ; that instantly after the arrival of the commodore all was bustle in the ship ; that the sails, some of which were unbent, were immediately bent, and the ship got ready with all possible expedition to proceed to sea ; that she got under

weigh next day, and proceeded down the river ; that they spoke a brig, which said they had been boarded the day before by a British cruiser, and that she had taken a man from her, who had been sent back again ; that, as they were going down the river, they got up a much larger quantity of shot and wads than had ever been customary on any other occasion while he was on board the ship ; and that he knows this to have been the case from having held the station of quarter-gunner ; that after proceeding to sea they cruised on the different parts of the coast without any thing materially happening until the 16th day of May ; that at twelve o'clock on that day, being below at dinner, word was brought that a frigate, supposed to be British, was in sight ; that orders were then given for clearing away the bulk heads, and preparing for action ; that soon after all hands were beat to quarters ; that every thing was then immediately got ready for action ; that at this time it was about two o'clock ; that all sails were then set, and they went eagerly in chace of the supposed frigate ; that orders were soon after given for pricking and firing the guns ; before dark, while they were approaching nearer the chace, orders were given to take the aprons off the guns ; and at that time this deponent looked at the ship they were in chace of through the bridle port, and he saw her colours flying ; that he saw red in them, but

could not correctly ascertain what colours they were; that at the distance they were, he is satisfied that with glasses they could easily be distinguished; that he heard Lieutenant Belding, who had a glass, and who commanded in his division, say that her colours were British; that when this deponent looked at her he could see her hull, and was satisfied that she was a small ship; that they continued after this period to approach her until between eight and nine o'clock, when they were within pistol-shot; that Commodore Rodgers then gave orders to stand by their guns, and not to fire till orders were given; that the commodore then hailed; and when he was hailing a second time, a gun in the division to which this deponent belongs, being the second division, went off, he thinks by accident; and that there were four or five men leaning on the gun at the time; that he instantly turned to acquaint the lieutenant that the gun had gone off by accident, the lieutenant then standing only three guns from him; that before he could do this, the whole broadside of the President was discharged; and that immediately after a general order was given, "Fire away as quick as possible;" that before the firing of the gun of his division, which he thinks went off by accident, and the broadside which immediately followed, this deponent is satisfied, he was looking out of the port, and distinctly

saw the Lille Belt, that not a gun had been fired from her; that the President, he thinks, continued firing about half an hour without cessation; that an order was then given to cease firing; that the President then filled her maintop-sail, and stood from the Lille Belt with her head to the southward, and continued all night on that tack without heaving-to; that the commodore, before he steered from the Lille Belt, hailed her to know if she had struck; the only part of the answer given that he could distinctly hear or understand was, that she was a British ship.

This deponent farther saith, that the President was wounded in her fore-mast and main-mast, a thirty-two pound shot having entered each of them; that the rest of the night after the engagement they were employed in repairing the damage sustained in the rigging. This deponent farther saith, that the crew of the President consists of about five hundred men, upwards of three hundred of which he knows to be British seamen, from having conversed with them, and having heard them declare they were so, and from many of them having designated the places they came from; that the engagement with the Lille Belt had excited great disgust in the British seamen on board the President, who had manifested their reluctance to fight against their country; that one man in particular had so plainly expressed this feeling,

as to have drawn on him the resentment of Commodore Rodgers, who put him in irons, in which situation he remained when this deponent left the ship for the aforesaid offence, and for having said that the first gun was fired from the President.

This deponent farther saith, that, after the President came into New-York, and was lying in the North River, that by the assistance of his hammock-lashings he got in the night from the fore-chains into the river, and swam to a place of safety, and has since procured a passage to Halifax.

WILLIAM BURKET, his X mark.

Sworn at Halifax, the day and year aforesaid, before us,

JOHN HOWE, } Justices of the Peace.
THO. BOGGS, }

V.

Deposition on Oath of another Seaman who was on Board the President during the Action.

Bristol, July 25, 1811.

JOHN RUSSELL deposes that he belonged to the President American frigate; that he did his duty in the fore-top; was quartered at the aftermost gun on the fore-castle, before they fell in with the Lille Belt. The commodore informed the ship's company, that he was ordered to demand two American seamen that had been pressed by a British frigate; if they were not

given up, he was to take them by force: when they went down to the Lille Belt the guns were double shotted, and loaded with grape; that the first gun was fired from the President, but he believes from accident, as no orders were given from the quarter-deck to fire; the guns had locks, and were all cocked. After the action, he was informed by the men in the waste, that a man was entangled with the lan-yard of the lock, that occasioned the gun to go off.

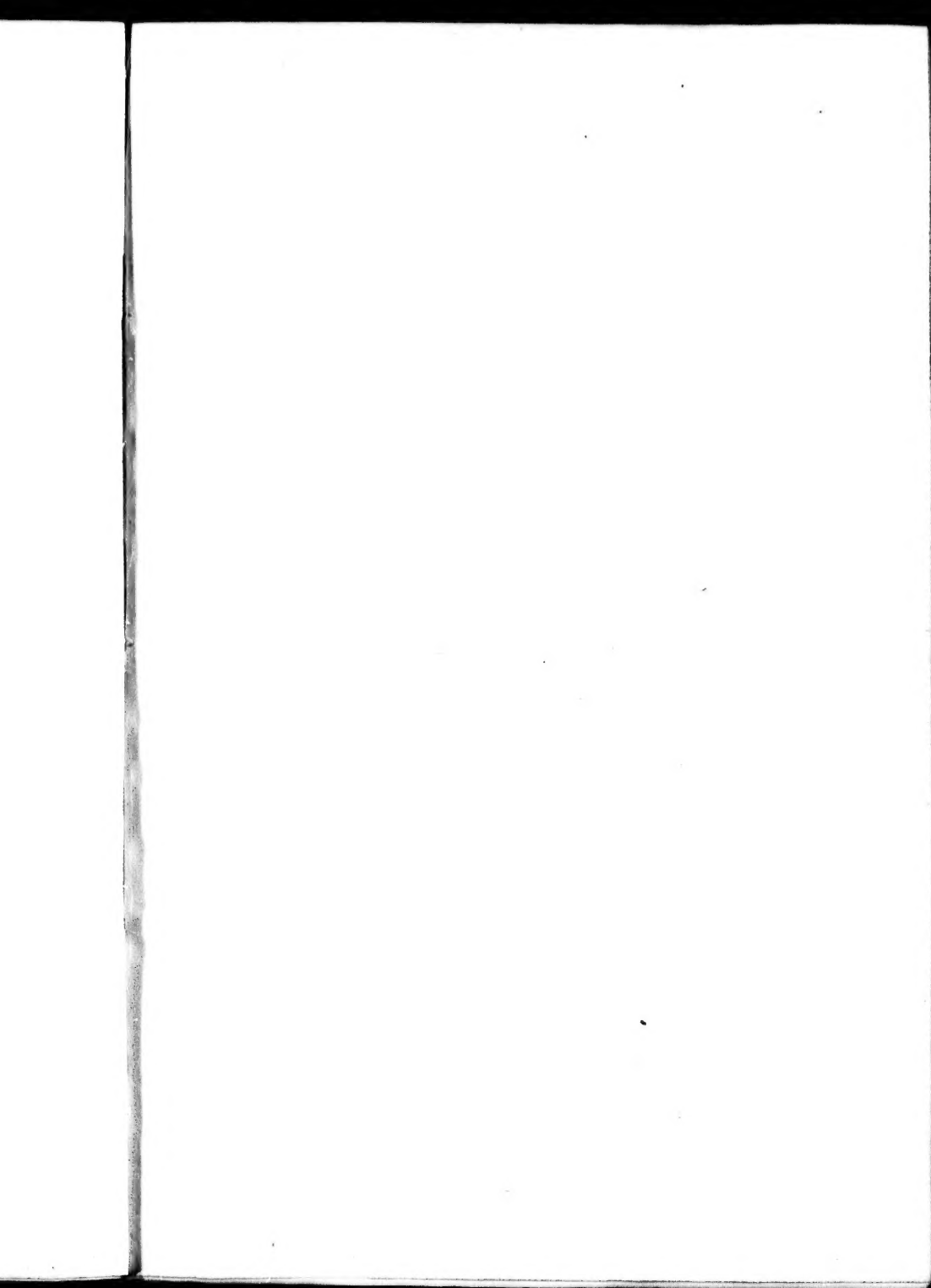
The
(Signed) JOHN X RUSSELL.

Mark of

The within-named John Russel was sworn to the truth of the within affidavit, before me, one of his Majesty's justices of the peace for the city and county of Bristol, the 27th day of July, 1811.

(Signed) DAVID EVANS.

THE END.



T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,
Whitefriars, London.

